

into the evening, we care about getting this done. It must be the Congress and the administration that takes hold of this and determines that people who are now struggling to pay mortgages, to survive, to feed children, we hope the Build Back Better bill will be a lifeline, but right now we have got to deal with people who wanted to do right and are suffering.

I want to close on this note: To create a more perfect Union, the Constitution guarantees me that. The Declaration of Independence says that this Nation was created to ensure the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

And I want to say to those who have gained student debt but never completed their degree, they are not in any way bad people, defaulters, deadbeats; no, they are not. The Constitution applies to all. But they are people who are working in jobs just to survive. They wanted to finish school, but they were so overloaded; maybe they had to leave to take care of a sick mother or a sick father or maybe they had to leave to take care of younger brothers and sisters. I know those stories. But maybe they are now back in school struggling to just try to get that degree.

Let's give them hope. Let's give them dignity. Let's help them with that default and turn it into success. Let's join in—Congressman, thank you—to cancel student loan debt. And we are not frivolous, big spenders. We are trying to put people on the right track so that they can contribute to this great economy and be givers, givers for what is good in America. I hope we can get the job done.

Mr. BOWMAN. Thank you so much, Congresswoman JACKSON LEE. You made me think of the hundreds or even thousands of students and families that I have met throughout my career in education who in elementary school have already made the decision that their children are not going to attempt to go to college despite their brilliance, despite them being artists and scientists and architects and engineers and athletes and musicians and all of those things.

Because of the crippling impact of student debt and cost of college, they have already made the decision when kids are as young as 5, 6 years old. That is unconscionable, that is un-American, and the President has the authority and the moral responsibility to cancel student debt right now. Thank you so much for your words.

I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. GOMEZ), the last speaker of the evening. I thank him for being here.

Mr. GOMEZ. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. BOWMAN for organizing this Special Order hour.

I like to describe the student loan debt crisis as a boot on the neck of the American Dream and on the neck of millions of Americans who make that American Dream a reality. And that is

because higher education is the one way that we achieve the American Dream. It is what I did.

I am the youngest of six of immigrant parents from Mexico. My two parents never made it past third grade. Both could read but not really write. One of the things that they knew is that coming here would give me that opportunity to change my life. I was fortunate enough to be born here. My brother Javier and I were born here, and I was one of the first to graduate from college.

It allowed me to believe that I could do more, to believe I could be part of this country, and about that American promise. You come here, you believe in our values, you work hard, you give back, you are going to have a place, and you are going to succeed; and the next generation, your kids and your grandkids, are going to do even better.

I am fortunate. I got to go to a community college after I worked at Subway and Target, and then I transferred to UCLA, graduated in the top 10 percent of my class. Then I got my master's of public policy from Harvard University.

I ended up walking away with \$15,000 in debt from undergrad, which wasn't bad. I thought it was a lot of money. When you graduate, and you are only getting paid \$24,000 a year, it was a lot of money. And I walked away with a little bit over \$65,000 from the Kennedy School for my master's degree. And don't forget, a lot of students also have credit card debt on top of that.

But you know what, I am fortunate that I got to go to school. I am fortunate that I have been able to change my life. I am fortunate that I have been able to get jobs that provide me health insurance for the first time in my family's history, and that my debt isn't as crippling as the current generation's debt.

The current generation's debt after the Great Recession ballooned to historic proportions. That is why you have trillions of dollars in student loan debt on the backs of 47 million Americans.

You know what? These are dreamers; these are people who believe in the American Dream, that say, you know what, I have been told, go to school, work hard. And you know what, it doesn't matter, if you get into the best school possible, take out that debt because it is going to come back tenfold. In the past, that was the case.

But we don't see that now. We see that the debt that has been put on the backs—because we underinvested in higher education, we underinvested in K-12—is crippling people to living their version of the American Dream.

It is so severe, and it pains me and it depresses me, that people are actually are deciding, I would rather not go to college because I don't want to have debt. Think about that. That is the decision people are making now, I would rather not have the best opportunity to achieve the American Dream because

the amount of debt will prevent me from living that American Dream once I graduate.

I think that is shameful because these are the folks that are renewing this idea to live a more just and perfect Union, to refresh that idea generation upon generation. And it is unfortunate because who does it impact? It often impacts immigrants, people of color, Blacks, Latinos, single mothers, single parents. They are the ones that are taking on higher and higher burdens of debt.

Then when they graduate, they sometimes get jobs that don't pay them that well because they want to give back. They care about their communities. We saw in a recent New York Times article that graduates from a school of social work were graduating with \$112,000 in debt but getting paid \$50,000. This is something that we see time and time again.

If people want to believe in the American Dream, then they have to care about canceling student loan debt; to refresh the potential of millions of Americans to buy their first house, to raise children, to start a business, to grow our economy. I believe that this is something that Americans from all sides of the aisle could agree on.

Madam Speaker, I am calling on the President to cancel \$50,000 of student loan debt in the next year.

Mr. BOWMAN. Madam Speaker, I thank Congressman GOMEZ for his powerful and inspiring words.

President Biden and his administration have made some important strides to improve student loan debt for many people who are enrolled in public service loan forgiveness. 30,000 people getting loan forgiveness is a big step in the right direction. Now we need loan forgiveness for the more than 40 million other people in this country.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF FREE STUFF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ROY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. ROY. Madam Speaker, I am fascinated to learn that I serve in the United States House of free stuff because that is what I have been hearing nonstop this entire week.

There is an unlimited supply of money and resources apparently, an unlimited supply of dollars that we can continue to print while devastating our economy, devastating the American dollar, and transforming our society by encouraging Americans to believe that there is a free lunch. And there ain't no free lunch.

My wife is the product of a single mom growing up in Texas. Her mom worked multiple jobs to send her to college. She worked hard to be able to go to college. She left with 70-some-thousand dollars of student loans

despite going to two top public universities in the State of Texas.

She is not asking for her loans to get repaid because she went there with a free will. She went there and made a choice. She could have chosen a different path. She chose to take the debt. I did the same thing when I went to law school at the University of Texas. I might not have chosen to go to law school if the loans hadn't been available, and that might be fine.

What is the fundamental problem? Why has the cost of education skyrocketed in my lifetime at an inflation rate multiple times over virtually every other product and service in this country except for healthcare? Why is it up something like 3,000 percent?

Is it perhaps because we are subsidizing the holy heck out of it? Just thinking perhaps that there might be a correlation to the availability—massive, widespread availability—of subsidized student loans, the massive subsidization of K-12 education and higher ed. Do we think there might be a correlation to why the costs have skyrocketed so much?

But no, no, no, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle now walk in here and say, oh, you know, we are not the party of big spenders; we have got a chart here with \$1.7 trillion on it with another chart saying, "Cancel Student Debt."

Who is paying for that? Does anybody in this body give a rat's rear end about who is paying for anything at all? No. Oh, no, then they will come out here and say \$3 trillion of tax cuts. They don't care about economic growth and opportunity. But fine.

Why don't we actually have a conversation about spending and taxes? No, no, we don't do that. We just spend money we don't have. That is what we did today in the continuing resolution to keep this government running. Oh, my gosh, panic ensues if you dare question whether or not the government must be funded Saturday at 12:01 in the morning. What will the American people do? How will they function if the United States House of free stuff isn't doling out free stuff?

□ 1945

No one is in this Chamber, of course. Just reminding the American people how this place doesn't work. We are now on 5½ straight years of no amendments being offered on the floor of this august Chamber.

I would like to remind the American people every once in a while that what they saw about how a bill becomes a law is a complete fraud. See, there is a handful of people who get into a room and they decide what you are going to vote on.

The Speaker knows it is true, and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle know it is true. And my colleagues on this side of the aisle know it is true because they did it when they were in the majority just as much as my colleagues on the other side of the aisle did it when they were in the majority.

We get a massive bill dropped on our desk, and we say take it or leave it. Go offer an amendment in rules, they say. Never taken. Never accepted. Always prechosen, always pregamed out.

This is deliberation and debate? This is the constitutional order? What value is there for an election certificate if you can't use it? You come to the floor and want to offer an amendment in good faith to try to make a piece of legislation better, and you can't do it.

We have 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 people max who decide everything that goes on in this Chamber in all of their infinite wisdom. Then we come down and look at the board, and it is party-line votes, and then it is walk out on the steps and go give a speech and go to the press and go on Twitter and go on Facebook and go talk about why you are voting no or yes. That is what we are relegated to in the United States House of free stuff.

But today, we just voted to extend the funding of government with a continuing resolution, which is going to barrel us toward a trillion-dollar deficit this year, give or take. Who knows? Does it matter? Does anybody know what the difference is between a trillion dollars or \$1.2 trillion? Does anybody know the difference between \$29 trillion in debt or \$30 trillion in debt? Nobody knows or cares in this Chamber. Literally not a lick. We don't talk about it.

Then each side comes down on the floor and offers more spending for whatever their priority is, defense, nondefense, mandatory spending, non-mandatory spending.

If the unbelievably terrible circumstance occurred Friday night at midnight of this government daring to pause, do the American people know that about 82 percent of it is on autopilot with mandatory spending? I mean, does that matter? When you walk out and a gaggle of reporters come up with bated breath, oh, no, there might be a government shutdown. It always gets paid back. Eighty-two percent of it keeps running.

There is never a serious debate about what is actually happening here in the United States of America. We never actually sit down like family or a small business, roll our sleeves up, and decide how to spend money. Do you imagine if we actually had to adhere to a budget like any business or American family, and we actually had to sit down, Madam Speaker, at that table and not leave this Chamber until we said our budget is \$3 trillion or \$4 trillion, whatever it is, here is our income; here is what we can spend; that is all we can do; let's figure out our priorities. Well, we disagree. You know, do you want to fund NEA? Do you want to fund the Department of Education, XYZ? Do you want to fund the military? Do you want to fund specific B-52 bombers? Do you want to fund healthcare? Do you want to fund border security?

Make a choice. We never make a choice, ever—both parties, by the way,

both leaders. We never make a choice. All we do is preen and posture and come down here with massive bills that have some of our priorities, depending on who is in the majority. That is it. Again, we are relegated to being the United States House of free stuff.

You have to call it free stuff because we are just printing the money to do the stuff. We are down here talking about, oh, we have to cancel the student debt. Well, man, wouldn't that be lovely? Who cares about the people who have already worked hard their whole lives to pay off their student loans, whether they be Black, Brown, White, male, female. Who cares?

They have worked their whole life. They paid off their student loans. They did what they were supposed to do, or they are in the middle of paying off their student loans. Oh, no, let's just go down here. One of my colleagues just said \$50,000, President Biden. Did they just pick that number out of the air? \$50,000 of free stuff, here you go.

Somebody else chose not to go to college. Somebody else started a business, worked hard, borrowed money to run a business. Guess what? That money also had interest, to my colleague from Michigan who was down here talking about, oh, the pain of interest. As if it is not as old as time, as if it is not Biblical to say: Hey, I don't have the money to do something. I would like to have the money to do something. How might I get the money to do something? I don't know. One, get a job and earn the money, save the money. Two, ask for it from somebody who loves you. Three, borrow it.

Okay, now what do you do with that? Go do something with it. Make a choice. Start a business. Start a lemonade stand. Go to college if you want. But, oh, no, let's just go pay off \$1.7 trillion of debt. It doesn't matter if you went to school and got a degree in sociology or gender studies and you are floating around and trying to figure out what you are going to do with your life. Oh, no, let's pay off that \$140,000.

There ain't no free lunch. But we live in this fiction that we can just keep printing money, and the horrors of printing the money is not just that we have \$30 trillion in debt; it is not just that we have rampant inflation; it is not just that we are undermining our dollar; it is not just that we are handing over power to China and every other country around the world to kick our rear ends; it is that we are funding a government to do things to us to interfere with us.

We are funding an FBI to target parents for daring to question the wisdom of school boards around this country. People say: Oh, that is not true. You must be embellishing.

It is not true? We just had hearings with the Attorney General of the United States. We just saw memoranda making it very clear that the FBI is targeting parents. We are funding that.

For all Americans out there watching this, all 12 of you, we are funding

that. We are borrowing dollars, spending money we don't have, and we are taking those dollars, and we are funding an FBI to target parents.

We are taking away dollars from police departments, and Federal dollars are going in and funding programs allegedly to take the place of police and then wondering why department stores are getting looted.

Then you have the White House press secretary today literally at the podium saying that is the fault of the pandemic, all the looting. We are not talking about somebody breaking into a grocery store to buy a loaf of bread. We are talking about people swarming a department store and taking Gucci bags.

Oh, no, let's not enforce the law. Let's not enforce the rule of law. Let's blame it on the pandemic. Let's blame Border Patrol for whipping migrants, which was demonstrably and totally and clearly false.

There is no shame coming from the Press Secretary's Office of the White House. No lie that won't easily slip out about what is actually going on, like Border Patrol agents whipping migrants. No apology. All of those Border Patrol agents down there on the front lines dealing with COVID, dealing with being outmanned and outgunned, dealing with cartels, no apology.

Here we sit in the United States House of free stuff funding the Department of Homeland Security not to secure the homeland; funding the Department of Education not to educate our kids, other than to indoctrinate them to hate our country and to believe they are racist for the color of their skin; \$700 billion for a Department of Defense to now run climate training and to focus on chief diversity officers in the Department of Defense rather than focusing on, I don't know, blowing stuff up and killing people, which is what the Department of Defense, formerly known as the Department of War, is actually supposed to do; \$11 billion for an Internal Revenue Service that took a record \$4 trillion from Americans last fiscal year; \$9 billion for an EPA that is destroying American energy through regulation, pushing a radical climate agenda. None of which, by the way, is actually going to drive down CO₂ production, which we have been doing with clean-burning American natural gas over the last decade.

Today, we pass this continuing resolution in the United States House of free stuff to rack up another trillion dollars of debt, continuing to fund agencies to carry out their tyrannical activities, in particular to carry out vaccine mandates on the American people that are getting slapped down one by one by courts across this country because, of course, the President of the United States doesn't have the authority or the power to mandate that an American citizen go into a doctor's office and get a needle jabbed in their arm. He doesn't have that power.

The United States House of free stuff here allegedly representing the people

is supposed to actually care enough about representing those people to stand here as a board holding the line against an authoritarian President of the United States, against a President carrying out executive overreach. That is what we see happening. He is being slapped down left and right by the courts.

Now, I don't believe in wearing a partisan hat when we are talking about standing up for the Constitution, standing up for the Article I branch of the Federal Government. I introduced legislation when the previous President, a Republican, President Trump, was in office called the Article I Act to take away powers from the President with respect to emergency powers being used. I did so, frankly, in the wake of the use of dollars for border fencing and wall construction, which I supported, which was important, which was a response to an emergency and, by the way, was working. But it was important for us to start laying out a foundation for protecting Article I, the United States Congress.

Today we pass a continuing resolution that we sent over to the United States Senate, and we never had a vote in this body about the vaccine mandates that are being slapped down in courts across this country for being unlawful, unconstitutional, tyrannical overreach by the executive branch of the United States.

Never in our history have we had Federal mandates applying across the country to the American citizens that they must be vaccinated. They have been local decisions, local schools, local counties in States and specific responses to highly communicable diseases that they knew might be communicable and be pulled back by a vaccine, and after many years of study with massive numbers of exemptions and protections for individual liberty and choice. That is the history of how we have handled it in a federalist 50-State republic, not a decision by a President or, frankly, probably more likely the President's advisers, that the American people must be vaccinated, that a small business or a business of any size must vaccinate their employees.

People act like, well, it is no big deal. I ought to direct my remarks here to my Republican colleagues, my Republican colleagues who today were perfectly happy to vote no on this CR. Yes, I will go home, and I will give a speech: I voted no on this CR. I voted no because this continuing resolution had these terrible provisions in it. And, yes, this continuing resolution had vaccine mandate funding, funding the Department of Labor and funding OSHA and funding the Department of Defense to carry out these mandates. I voted no, don't you know.

So what? Who cares if you voted no? You vote no, and you give a speech, pat yourself on the back. Good for you. Did you do anything, go stand with any of the Senators who had a chance to actu-

ally do something with this, with the Senators over there right now having a debate and trying to force a vote on an amendment to prevent the tyrannical application of vaccine mandates?

Did my colleagues say let's go round up and go over and stand alongside MIKE LEE, or did they hide behind the Article III judiciary? Did they hide behind the courts and say, well, let's let the courts sort it out. No, that is exactly what they did. Secure the blessings of liberty in the Constitution indeed by the supposed primary branch of government.

□ 2000

And these have real consequences for real Americans, real lives. Hospitals in Massachusetts are already limiting elective procedures due to critical staffing shortages. Do we care? Are we concerned about that?

The New York Governor issued an executive order that postponed elective surgeries in order to deal with the staffing shortages. Do we care? Are we concerned?

The largest children's hospital in Wisconsin is struggling to treat victims of the BLM extremist, who rammed his car through the Waukesha Christmas parade. Do we care?

A dear friend of mind suffering from multiple sclerosis, teaching at the university, she is being told she may not be able to continue teaching because she believes, in consultation with her doctor, that it is in her best interest not to be vaccinated at this time. She should have the right and the ability to choose to do that for her and her family and her interest without coercion from an overextended Federal Government under an unlawful and unconstitutional mandate by the President of the United States.

And this body, the Congress of the United States, should do its Article I job and stand up in defense of her and every other American who is facing losing their job at Thanksgiving and Christmas, or being discharged from the military of the United States that they proudly served because they believe in their interest, in their own personal safety, their own health interest, that they should be the one to choose, not a faraway President.

We structured this government specifically not to do this. We structured this government with Federalism and separation of powers specifically to avoid having a king. That man on the painting over on this wall, in this House Chamber, the first President of the United States, turned down being a king, turned down the monarchy, turned down a third term because the Founders knew why that mattered. The Founders knew why separating powers and limiting powers mattered because they saw and foresaw exactly what we are seeing today in this country and across the world. Where, in Austria and Germany and Australia and places around the world, we see mandates forcing people to be in their homes and

not go out and not engage in society because they are not vaccinated. It is absurd.

This country is built on a bedrock of liberty and protecting liberty and securing the blessings of liberty, and this President is stepping on it. And the United States Congress, Members of both parties, are MIA, missing in action, unwilling to stand up in defense of liberty while patting themselves on the back for voting “no” on a continuing resolution and then kicking it over to the Senate for one man to stand on the floor of the United States Senate, Senator MIKE LEE, daring to say we should have a vote on an amendment, an amendment that says we shouldn’t have this vaccine mandate. God bless MIKE LEE for doing that. I hope he holds to his guns.

And no, I am not going to freak out or panic if Saturday at 12:05 in the morning rolls around and, Oh, no, we haven’t gotten that funding done. That funding, by the way, that is racking up, as I said before, another trillion dollars of debt. The United States House of free stuff.

A father called me up in tears because his 13-year Army veteran son is likely going to be discharged because he believes, based on his conversation with his doctors, that it is not in his interest to get the vaccination. Millions of Americans who know they have natural immunity, who have been ignored, who have been absolutely ignored because the leaders of our national health organizations and agencies aren’t actually focusing on natural immunity. We haven’t had a study on natural immunity of any consequence out of our leaders. We have got to rely on Israel and the U.K. and other places, and private entities. But all of these millions of Americans who have natural immunity are being told, Sorry, you must still go get a needle stuck in your arm in order to have a job.

In what world is this the land of the free? It is not. And in what world are the people in this Chamber who are supposed to represent the people of the United States, how are they doing their job in the Article I branch of our Federal Government if they are not standing up for these people?

Those people who are going about their lives, making decisions in our interests—and by the way, as if this matters to me a whole lot—that even the experts, so-called, heading up our national health agencies and organizations, acknowledge that if you are vaccinated you still spread the daggone virus. It literally makes no sense.

We are killing people. We are restraining and restricting therapeutics that can actually help people. We belittle people who are working in consultation with doctors to find ways to solve the problem if they happen to get the virus—whether they have been vaccinated or not, by the way. And we are mandating people to get the vaccination, irrespective of whether they had the virus and have natural immunity.

For months, I have been hearing about, Oh, they laugh off natural immunity. And now suddenly, you start to hear—bow down to the altar of all things—Dr. Fauci, that he suddenly said, Oh, yeah, natural immunity, that is kind of a real thing. No kidding.

What world do you live in? The world of Washingtonian magazine and propping your feet up with sunglasses and getting cool pictures and throwing baseballs out at games?

I had a young woman who is 9 months pregnant. Remember all the frontline workers everybody was celebrating a year ago? She is one of them; she is a nurse. I saw all these people standing up at games, people in this Chamber going around praising the frontline workers. Well, good, we should have been praising the frontline workers who are out there, in an unknown virus, showing up and helping those who were sick. But suddenly now, if you are one of those frontline workers, and for your own health and well-being, you decide you don’t believe you should be vaccinated, you might have natural immunity, maybe you have got an underlying condition and you choose not to. Then this young lady, a Texan, who is 9 months pregnant, is losing her job in direct response to the President’s unlawful and unconstitutional mandates.

Let’s talk about those mandates for a minute.

The OSHA mandate. When the President goes in and tells businesses across this country, You must get your employees vaccinated or go through OSHA rulings and fines. This body just voted to increase the OSHA fines, something like 700 percent or 900 percent. We just did that when we passed the so-called BBB bill that is going to destroy America with a whole bunch of more free stuff, \$2 trillion of unpaid nonsense.

Oh, no, don’t worry. It’s paid for. CBO said so. Garbage. Absolute, pure garbage. Of course, it is not paid for. It was games. The American people know all this. It is how this body works. Nobody here is serious about actually operating within the bounds of normalcy, like you would in a business or in your home, because they don’t care. There is no consequence. There is literally no consequence to spending money we don’t have, to printing money. But that is what we do.

So we just voted to increase fines by OSHA. Now with those fines OSHA can go target businesses.

Well, what happened? Now, that has been consolidated. U.S. District judge for the Eastern District of Missouri granted a preliminary injunction on November 29 for 10 States who brought forth a November 10 lawsuit by State AGs.

On December 1, in a similar ruling, Louisiana Western District U.S. Judge Terry Doughty issued a nationwide injunction to the CMS mandate, a separate mandate, a CMS mandate—sorry, I mixed these up.

The OSHA mandate, a panel of judges with the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals issued an order staying enforcement and implementation of the OSHA mandate.

Now, back to the CMS mandate. Matt Schelp, the U.S. District judge for the Eastern District of Missouri, granted a preliminary injunction for 10 States. And on December 1, in a similar ruling, there is a nationwide injunction on the CMS mandates. So these are the mandates that are shutting down hospitals and nurses and doctors from carrying out their job.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle don’t care. And I know they don’t care because they just passed a continuing resolution continuing to fund the mandates of a tyrannical executive branch without holding him accountable.

□ 2010

I promise you if that were a Republican President they would be outraged at these mandates. My colleagues on this side of the aisle think voting “no” and walking out to go to dinner is perfectly fine because that is what is going on here. They are not over in the Senate backing up MIKE LEE or here talking.

Federal workers mandate, Federal contractors mandate—on November 30, U.S. District Judge Gregory Van Tatenhove of the Eastern District of Kentucky issued a preliminary injunction halting the government’s enforcement of the Federal contractor vaccine mandate, which, by the way, is mandating universities, which is causing my friend with MS to possibly or probably lose her teaching job.

Veterans, Active Duty military, frontline health workers, university teachers, professors, visiting professors, people across this country in private business—hopefully, the courts will strike this down. Since when is it the job of the Article I Congress to punt to the courts, and say, Well, I hope you do it.

Do we care about the power of the purse?

Do we care if bureaucrats are targeting American citizens, saying, You must get a needle in your arm?

There is no science indicating in any way, shape, or form that those mandates are solving any problem at all, but rather causing problems. Over 80 percent of Americans over the age of 12 years old have gotten one shot of the vaccine; 99 percent or something close to it are people over 65.

We are not even a year into the broad rollout of the vaccines. This blows way past the polio epidemic. My dad had polio. I am well-versed in the impacts of the polio epidemic. It didn’t roll out nearly this fast. It was targeted at kids, not people over 65.

Any mandates were left to school districts, and it took them awhile to get there. This was a vaccine that had been worked on for years with a significant amount of knowledge. It was a different kind of virus, by the way, not a coronavirus.

A 21-year-old nursing assistant in Crawfordsville, Indiana, worked 60-hour weeks throughout the pandemic; she is facing termination. Do we care? Does the Indiana delegation care? Either side of the aisle? I would like to know.

Is the Indiana delegation over along-side MIKE LEE fighting to prevent the funding of the government bureaucrats that are going to enforce that mandate on Becca Pitts?

Jen Peters, a 39-year-old San Diego maternity nurse was forced to resign from her position after not getting vaccinated.

I recently met with heart surgeons that fly around the country saving lives doing heart surgeries. They come in and they do that. They do pro bono work. They do a lot of volunteer work. They fly all over the world. They have been providers for, roughly, three decades, and if the CMS mandates stay in place, they are no longer going to be able to save lives, they will have to shut down. Are we fine with that? Is that okay?

Dozens of my constituents in the military have contacted me about this vaccine mandate. I represent thousands—like many of us do—but I represent San Antonio, a heavy population of veterans and Active Duty military. People call me in tears because it was their dream to serve their country and wear the uniform of the United States, and they are being told they must get the jab, or they will be discharged.

I am not talking about the ability of a commander of a submarine going out for a 9-month tour, and saying, Okay. Sorry. I am going to make sure everybody in the submarine is vaccinated. Okay. Do you have to discharge the guy or gal? Or you can say, You know what, we are going to relocate you and leave you able to serve. But while this virus is going around, we are going to require the commander of the submarine to be able to make that decision. Okay. That is a reasonable outcome.

Discharging under current law dishonorably, by the way, members of the United States military for not wanting to get the vaccine, for whatever reason they believe is in their interest, with young men in particular having concerns about the myocarditis and the heart issues, and we are going to say, Sorry, too bad, you get discharged.

This body just funded the DOD, and the government is forcing those people to be discharged, instead of continuing to carry out their service to this country, and this body should be ashamed of it.

A lot of people in this town seem to have forgotten that the American people are not our subjects. They are our fellow citizens, and we owe them the duty of representing them. They are our neighbors, our relatives, our friends. The people are sovereign in this country, not the President.

George Washington turned that down, the Founders rejected that

structure, and yet this body, which was supposed to be a check against an overbearing executive acting as a monarch refuses to check the executive.

The CDC estimates that there have been 146 million infections, suggesting that nearly half of the United States has natural immunity.

The first U.S. omicron patient was fully vaccinated and had mild symptoms. One study found the protective effect of the vaccine dwindles alarmingly at 3 months after the second shot, hence, the boosters. People are now saying that maybe we made a mistake, having the first two shots of the vaccine happen right next to each other reduced the effectiveness. Well, lo and behold, hard to believe when you are rushing and reacting to a virus that you might make an error.

Financial institutions today are putting out reports saying their concern isn't about the omicron variant but rather governments' reaction to it. Of course, it is. One of the first doctors who discovered the variant in South Africa said, "Most of the patients are seeing very, very mild symptoms. We have been able to treat these patients conservatively at home."

On the 626th day into 15 days to slow the spread, we have had enough. The American people have had enough of being lied to and told what to do by a tyrannical Federal Government and so-called experts that we cannot and should not trust.

This continuing resolution that we passed today was considered under a closed rule. As I said earlier, no chance for amending it. I offered an amendment upstairs—rejected. We don't want to have a debate on vaccine mandates. Why would we want to do that?

My colleagues, I assume, would not like to take a vote on a vaccine mandate funding repeal. Otherwise, why not have the vote? Why not have the debate? The more and more that we turn over the decisionmaking to a small group of people in this body and a small group of people in the Senate and a couple of people at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue, the more and more this Republic is getting ripped apart thread by thread. It is happening no matter who is in the White House and no matter who is in charge of this body.

□ 2020

If we do not restore debate on the floor of this body and in the Senate—the greatest deliberative body in the world. Come on.

When was the last time you saw any great debate or deliberation in that body or this one, Madam Speaker?

You don't. We all know it. Nobody cares because all we are going to do is drop another 2,000-page bill, somebody is going to offer a motion to recommit. Boy, that will light things on fire. Oh, the previous question. Oh, man, the bars around town are talking about you.

Did you see that previous question?

Did you see that MTR?

When are we going to represent the people again?

When is this institution going to actually stand up and do the hard part of representation?

We don't govern. We use that term a lot. We don't govern. We represent. That is what we are supposed to do in a republic.

Next week we are going to turn to the National Defense Authorization Act, and if the Senate doesn't make any additional modifications, we are going to have another version of the NDAA, the National Defense Authorization Act, sent over to this Chamber for us to vote on again. In that legislation there are a number of problematic provisions. There is no accountability for the failed exit from Afghanistan, the 13 marines who died, the failed drone strike that led to the killing of 10 people including seven children. No accountability.

There is no accountability for the \$85 billion of assets left behind in Afghanistan that were just being used in a parade by our enemies, by the Taliban. No accountability.

Madam Speaker, you have legislation that requires the Secretary of Defense to submit to Congress their plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and praises the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Well, praise the Lord. Our Department of Defense is focused on the really important stuff as China is doubling and tripling and quadrupling their navy, ramping up their military prowess, and shooting missiles around the Earth at low orbit hitting their targets. Yes. Let's focus on diversity. Yes. That will get them.

That NDAA requires the DOD to hire and train gender advisers. Boy, that will send the Chinese packing.

Yes, the National Defense Authorization Act will for the first time in the history of this country require women—girls—18 years and older to register for Selective Service, to register to be eligible for the draft.

My daughter is 10 years old. The infinite wisdom of this body is going to require that my daughter be forced to register for the draft. If we want to have a debate about ending the draft, I am happy to do it. Let's offer the bill, let's have a debate and decide if we need to draft. I think most people in this body would probably vote the draft down. But that is not what we are going to do because my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and, frankly, the retreat by my colleagues on my side of the aisle from such touchy issues, they want to make a statement. They want to make a statement about so-called equity, and they want to use my daughter to make that statement. They want to make your daughter, America, part of that statement.

If you are one of the thousands of people across this country who have been reaching out to my office enraged because this body with no debate, no amendment, and no vote on the substance is going to adopt the National

Defense Authorization Act that for the first time in history will require your daughter, your sister, your mom, and your wife to register for the draft. Well, don't worry, I am going to keep fighting it.

I am not going to retreat, and I am not going to run away from some pollster coming in saying, Well, I don't know. I am not sure how people feel about it.

I know how people feel about it. I know how they feel about it in my district. I know how they feel about it in my kids' school, in my communities. I know the people who have stop me in the airport saying thank you for standing up for some sort of common sense about how we should actually function as a society.

Speaking of the United States House of free stuff, we spent \$36 million for a study to determine whether single-sex units performed better or worse than mixed-sex units.

What do you think they found?

Madam Speaker, you will be blown away by this piece of information. The single-sex male units performed better. Oh, we don't want to have that talk. My colleagues don't want to have that debate. But I am going to keep having that debate.

Whatever they do at the NDAA, if the Senate doesn't have the backbone, if my Republican colleagues in the United States Senate won't stand up for my daughter—our daughters—I will keep calling them out, every single one of them. I will call on every one of my colleagues in this body, and I sure as heck will not ever vote for a single one of them for any office if they are going to make my daughter eligible for the draft.

This is not the way we should do things.

Have a debate, offer data, have amendments, have the courage to have straight up-or-down votes on subjects rather than mega bills cooked up in back rooms so people can go preen and posture in front of cameras outside on the steps.

No matter who is in charge of this body, restore this body, and don't continue to operate as the United States House of free stuff doling out dollar after dollar and printing money to create programs that we can't even afford and to fundamentally alter and transform this society into one that is expected from government rather than serving themselves, their fellow man, and their communities.

We are destroying the core of this great country by empowering government and doing so knowing full well we don't have the dollars or the resources to do it; knowing full well that we are ripping out the soul of people by taking away the value of work; and destroying family units; destroying the public education system, by turning them into political corruption entities. The veil having been lifted now after COVID has exposed so much of that corruption, and what we just saw in

Loudoun County, Virginia, what we just saw unfold in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The American people are seeing the corruption that flows from the dollars that flow from this town without any responsibility. Again, that is not a partisan statement. Both sides are equally guilty of walking into this Chamber and writing checks they can't cash. And if we don't stop it, this country will not survive. This country will not make it. We will not keep the Republic if we keep spending money we don't have. If we keep turning over power to a small group of individuals in this Chamber, the other Chamber, the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue and, oh, by the way, the courts to make decisions rather than the people's Representatives.

It is time, Madam Speaker, for this body to function again. And it is time for us to do it without regard to who is in the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue in the White House. We have a duty in Article I to use the power of the purse responsibly, to stand up for the people, to defend the people, and to stop the encroachment in their lives by unelected bureaucrats or a President using power that has now already in three different courts been found to be unconstitutionally and unlawfully executed against the people while they are lose their jobs, lose their livelihoods, destroy their lives because they want to make a decision that they believe is in the interest of them and their families.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 5344

Mr. MFUME. Madam Speaker, I hereby remove my name as a cosponsor of H.R. 5344.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's request is accepted.

□ 2030

OXFORD HIGH SCHOOL MASS SHOOTING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. SLOTKIN) for 30 minutes.

Ms. SLOTKIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in the shadow of a terrible tragedy that has shaken my district and the entire State of Michigan to its core.

Oxford, Michigan, is a quiet town in northern Oakland County. It is a small, close-knit community where folks know and care for each other. But just 2 days ago, in less than 5 minutes, the heart of the town was ripped out in a flurry of screams and gunfire.

On Tuesday, a 15-year-old boy walked into his Oxford High School and took the lives of four of his fellow students, four young Michiganders with their entire lives ahead of them.

I mentioned them in our moment of silence, but it bears repeating.

Hana St. Juliana was an exuberant freshman on the volleyball and basketball team. She babysat for a friend of mine and brought joy to all who knew her. She made her high school debut on the basketball team on Monday night. Hana was 14 years old.

Madisyn Baldwin was going to graduate this year, and she had already been accepted to several colleges, some with a full scholarship. She had a younger half-brother and two sisters, and her friends described her as an artist who loved to draw and read and write. Madisyn was 17.

Tate Myre was a tight end and running back on the varsity football team and an honor student. Already, there is a petition with more than 80,000 signatures circulating to rename Oxford's football stadium in honor of Tate. He was 16 years old.

Justin Shilling was a senior getting ready for life after high school. He was the co-captain of the school's bowling team, and he worked part time at Anita's Kitchen, a restaurant in nearby Lake Orion. Justin was 17.

The loss of these four young people has ripped a hole in our community, and the trauma inflicted on their friends and classmates will never fully subside.

No one has been left unscathed. The aftershocks of the senseless act of violence are being felt across the State, most clearly in the 60 school districts that have been forced to cancel school out of an abundance of caution due to copycat threats.

All of us can see ourselves in the parents, students, and teachers at Oxford, but we can't begin to imagine their pain.

As agonizing as the last few days have been, the place to take solace is in the incredible response of the hundreds of first responders who jumped into action to end the violence before more lives were taken.

Yesterday, I visited the professionals at the Oakland County Operations Center, which was the eye of the hurricane on Tuesday, and heard firsthand accounts of heroism, bravery, and dedication under extreme stress.

In the darkness of the event, the light we should try and focus on is that, in our hour of need, our first responders were trained and ready. They did not hesitate. In the span of just a few minutes, the gunman fired 30 shots, hitting 11 people. Four of them are dead.

When the gunman was stopped by law enforcement inside the school, he had 18 rounds left. I shudder to think about how much more damage could have been done if those officers hadn't stopped him so quickly.

The people who responded on Tuesday saved lives unequivocally. The training, speed, and efficiency of those on site made all the difference, and I want to speak directly to them for a moment.